

**MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRY  
SENIOR COMMUNITY SERVICE EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM  
PROGRAM YEAR 2014 STATE PLAN MODIFICATION**

I am pleased to submit the Montana SCSEP modifications in accordance with the US Department of Labor's Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 8-14. This modification reflects the ongoing efforts to increase and improve services to the older workers in our rural state.

The modification to the SCSEP State Plan includes:

- Strategies for improving SCSEP services to SCSEP participants;
- Long-term projections for jobs in industries and occupations in the state that may provide employment opportunities to older workers;
- A description of the localities and populations for which projects of the type authorized by title V are most needed;
- The state's long-term strategy for achieving an equitable distribution of SCSEP positions within the state that: (1) moves positions from over-served to underserved locations within the state in compliance with 20 CFR 641.365; and (2) Equitably services rural and urban areas.

The SCSEP state plan modification was developed through coordination and input from the National Grantee, Experience Works that also operates SCSEP in the state of Montana.

**Soliciting and Collecting Public Comments**

The Montana SCSEP State Plan modification will be posted on the Governor's State Workforce Investment Board's website for comment. Comments received will be included with this modification.

**Improving SCSEP Services**

In PY14, the Montana Department of Labor and Industry, through coordination with the National Grantee Experience Works submitted a grant application for and received Limited Competition funds to provide expanded training services to participants. Through the Limited Grant Opportunity, Montana has been providing more in-depth training to participants to increase computer literacy skills, soft skills, and occupational skills that gives them the opportunity to obtain industry recognized certifications needed for employment in today's high demand industries in order to market their skills effectively to employers and be in a position to negotiate for better paying jobs. Experience Works staff now has access to traveling computer labs and the software needed to provide training to a total of 40 State SCSEP participants throughout the state during the grant period of July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015. The expected outcomes are increased entered employment; employment retention; and increased salaries. In addition to the training opportunities through the grant, the funds allows for more access to supportive services by participants such as transportation so they may participate in training and work towards successful program completion.

The Department expects that the expanded training opportunity will be ongoing beyond the end of the Limited Grant Opportunity funding period with the an already established training plan in place along with the established computer labs, training materials and staff expertise result from the Limited Grant Opportunity funding.

**Long-term projections for jobs in industries and occupations in the state that may provide employment opportunities for older workers. (20 CFR 641.302(d))**

According to labor market information produced by DLI's Research and Analysis Bureau, Montana has recovered from recessionary employment levels. Annual gains have been observed every year since 2010, with 2014 employment levels exceeding the pre-recession peak. Going forward, total employment is expected to continue to grow. Projections by the Research and Analysis Bureau predict gains of approximately 8,300 jobs per year in 2014 and 2015, a growth rate of approximately 1.7% per year, slowing to approximately 6,700 jobs per year through 2022. The slowdown in job growth is expected, in part, to be a result of a labor shortage from a lack of younger workers available to fill positions left by retirees. This shortage will provide opportunity for older workers able to retrain for work in high-demand industries and occupations.

Within the overall economy; many occupations that may be considered suitable for older workers with retraining are projected to grow through 2022. Nursing, psychiatric, and home health aide occupations, healthcare support occupations, secretary and administrative assistant occupations, and motor vehicle operator occupations are all expected to grow over this time period. Specific examples of fast growing occupations include home health aides, with total jobs projected to grow at an average rate of 5.5% annually, and medical secretaries, projected to add new jobs at rate of 3.2% per year. More modest increases are predicted for a number of other occupations as well. For example, customer service representatives are expected to experience average annual growth of about 2.1% while motor vehicle operators are expected to see average annual growth of 1.6%.

Positive job growth in these and other occupations, coupled with higher than normal hiring due to replacement of retirees, is likely to result in ample opportunity for older workers willing to undertake re-training to find employment.

**A description of the localities and populations for which projects of the type authorized by title V are most needed (20 CFR 641.325 (d).)**

Whenever demographic and economic data are made available SCSEP grantees will work with other Montana agencies to ensure compliance in connecting localities and populations with projects authorized by Title V. There are 217 authorized national positions and 56 authorized state positions in Montana for PY14. After modifications, those numbers have been reduced to 200 national positions and 56 state positions. Both State and National SCSEP authorized positions have fluctuated over the last three years, decreasing from PY12 to PY13, and then increasing slightly to levels still below those in PY12, from PY13 to PY14. The State SCSEP equitable distribution for PY14 allows for 52 modified positions in 10 counties while the national grantees have 200 modified positions in 51 of Montana's 56 counties. Ten Montana counties have both national and state SCSEP services. Following the 2010 Census, there are five counties that are now authorized for zero positions to be served: Garfield, Golden Valley, Petroleum, Treasure and Wibaux counties. The SCSEP grantees' hopes are to once again serve the counties of Golden Valley, Petroleum, Treasure and Wibaux and hope that positions will be authorized at some point in the near future so that any citizen that would be deemed eligible and in need of training could be served.

The Montana localities/populations where SCSEP services are most needed are those that are often the hardest to serve: remote, rural, counties which have limited commerce, and thus, limited prospects for employment. These counties make up the vast majority of the state, and the current variance situation

for national and state grantees reflects this fact. As of the latest quarter for which Equitable Distribution data is available, the State Grantee had a total variance of -1 from the number of modified state positions, and the National Grantee had a total variance of -23 from the number of modified national positions. While in another, smaller state this under-enrollment might result from a handful of counties with significant negative variance, in Montana, no single county has state or national grantee under-enrollment of more than 4 participants. In other words, the statewide under-enrollment evident in Montana is the result of a large number of remote, rural counties which are slightly under-enrolled.

The following chart shows a comparison of equitable distribution of position between PY'13 and PY'14.

COUNTY	STATE POSITIONS 2013	STATE POSITIONS 2014	NATIONAL POSITIONS 2013	NATIONAL POSITIONS 2014
Beaverhead	0	0	3	3
Big Horn	2	2	3	3
Blaine	0	0	3	3
Broadwater	0	0	2	2
Carbon	0	0	3	4
Carter	0	0	1	1
Cascade	5	5	14	15
Chouteau	0	0	2	1
Custer	2	2	3	3
Daniels	0	0	1	1
Dawson	0	0	2	2
Deer Lodge	0	0	3	3
Fallon	0	0	1	1
Fergus	0	0	4	4
Flathead	8	8	12	13
Gallatin	3	3	10	10
Garfield	0	0	0	0
Glacier	0	0	4	4
Golden Valley	0	0	0	0
Granite	0	0	2	2
Hill	0	0	4	4
Jefferson	0	0	3	3
Judith Basin	0	0	1	1
Lake	5	5	5	5
Lewis and Clark	6	6	8	8
Liberty	0	0	1	1
Lincoln	0	0	10	10
Madison	0	0	3	3
McCone	0	0	1	1
Meagher	0	0	1	1
Mineral	0	0	2	2
Missoula	10	11	14	15
Musselshell	0	0	2	2
Park	0	0	6	6
Petroleum County	0	0	0	0
Phillips	0	0	1	1
Pondera	0	0	2	2

Powder River	0	0	1	1
Powell	0	0	3	3
Prairie	0	0	1	1
Ravalli	5	5	11	11
Richland	0	0	3	3
Roosevelt	0	0	3	3
Rosebud	0	0	3	3
Sanders	0	0	7	7
Sheridan	0	0	2	2
Silver Bow	0	0	11	11
Stillwater	0	0	2	2
Sweet Grass	0	0	1	1
Teton	0	0	3	3
Toole	0	0	2	2
Treasure	0	0	0	0
Valley	0	0	3	3
Wheatland	0	0	2	2
Wibaux	0	0	0	0
Yellowstone	9	9	18	19
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>217</b>

Counties with no State or National Authorized Positions PY12, PY13 and PY14

Counties that no longer have State authorized positions

There are four SCSEP coordinators, located in Helena, Missoula, Billings and Great Falls that have expertise in serving both urban and rural, to the **very** rural areas of the state. The coordinators also serve as field representatives that do outreach and provide services to both state and national grantee participants within the counties in their area. Cascade, Flathead, Lewis and Clark, Missoula, Gallatin and Yellowstone counties are the most largely populated areas in the state. Montana also has seven reservations which presents a challenge due to their high unemployment and few opportunities for jobs. However three of them are located in or very near the most heavily populated counties which could be on the positive side for accessing jobs in those counties with larger cities. With the exception of Yellowstone County the largely populated counties are located in the western portion of the state. These heavily populated counties are also the most diverse in population.

**The state's long-term strategy for achieving an equitable distribution of SCSEP positions within the state that:**

**1. Moves positions from over-served to underserved locations within the state in compliance with 20 CFR 641.365.**

The goal for SCSEP is to distribute the workers served by the program in accordance with the equitable distribution of positions per county. Montana's SCSEP grantees will coordinate efforts in working toward the goal of equitable distribution of the SCSEP slots within the counties and will explore the strategy of moving slots around from over-served to under-served counties wherever possible in order to achieve equitable distribution.

## **2. Equitably serves rural and urban areas.**

The SCSEP grantees are consistently working toward equitable distribution in each county. There are no counties that are significantly over-served or under-served based on U. S. Census 2010 data. Under-enrollment in some counties may be due to the large, rural and sparsely populated rural areas that also have a higher unemployment rate than the state's average unemployment rate. Over-enrollment in some counties may be due to those counties being more urban in nature with one of them being the largest city in the state. The concentrated population in these counties generally lead to a push to enroll more participants because they provide the most opportunities for outreach to potential enrollees and employers. SCSEP grantees plan to work more closely over the next two program years to coordinate recruitment and enrollment efforts. This will ensure Montana's counties are served appropriately so that authorized positions in the counties more closely align with equitable distribution.

The population shifts for PY'12 caused concern for those counties in which equitable distribution eliminated positions. The national SCSEP grantee has authorized positions in fifty-one counties out of the total fifty-six counties in Montana. Ten of these counties also have state-designated positions as well. Following the 2010 Census, there are five counties that have zero authorized positions: Garfield, Golden Valley, Petroleum, Treasure and Wibaux counties. The SCSEP grantees' hopes are to once again serve the counties of Golden Valley, Petroleum, Treasure and Wibaux and hope that positions will be authorized at some point in the near future so that any citizen that would be deemed eligible and in need of training could be served.